LAND USE, TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION, AND UTILITIES

LAND USE

Folsom Lake State Recreation Area

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by

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Introduction

The Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (the Unit) includes approximately 18,000 acres of water and land. For the most part, land uses within the Unit are recreation related and reflect a range of activity and development intensity. However, the very existence of the Unit is the result of the Central Valley Project, which dammed the American River and created Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma for the purposes of flood control, water supply, and power generation. Operation of the lakes for these purposes has a direct affect on recreational uses in the Unit and the involvement of several State, federal, and local agencies results in a complex regulatory context. The recreation-related land uses within the Unit, and the impacts on these uses by non-recreational activities are summarized in this Chapter.

The Unit is located in the greater Sacramento Region, defined as the six-county area comprising the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), including El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yuba, and Yolo counties. According to the U.S. Census, the 2000 regional population was 1.94 million[1] with SACOG projecting the region will see a 49 percent (928,000) increase in residents and a 60 percent (510,000) increase in jobs by 2020.[2] As the region continues to accommodate significant growth, the development trend currently being experienced in the areas surrounding the Unit will also continue – that is the historical pattern of agriculture will give way to largely urban development. In general, the intensity of development that currently surrounds the Unit increases from north to south from rural to urban.

The Unit straddles three County jurisdictions (El Dorado in the east, Placer in the west, and Sacramento in the south) and the City of Folsom. Given that the Unit is increasingly surrounded by urban development, the policies of these jurisdictions have implications for the long-term management of the Unit. Relevant policies are summarized in this Chapter.

Land Use in the Unit

This section briefly summarizes the recreation and non-recreation land uses in the Unit and their relationship to each other. The specifics of each recreation area in the Unit are described more fully in the Recreation Resources section of this document.

Recreation Uses – Folsom Lake

The recreation areas on Folsom Lake provide for a wide range of activities, with most areas accommodating multiple park activities. These areas represent discrete recreation centers with, in most cases, several miles of undeveloped shoreline separating each area. Primary visitor areas are the most developed and provide a wide range of visitor services and easy access on major routes from adjacent to urban centers. Secondary visitor areas are more remotely located and less formally developed.

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[1] U.S. Census Bureau, *Census 2000 Summary File 3*, 2002.
[2] Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), *SACOG Projections*, March 2001.

The primary visitor areas on Folsom Lake include Granite Bay, Beals Point, Folsom Point, and Brown's Ravine. These areas appeal to a full range of water-dependant and related uses and are the most popular in the Unit accounting for almost 60 percent of total visits in 2000. Granite Bay and Beals Point in Placer County are the main day-use areas on the western shoreline with swim beaches, picnic areas, and boat launch facilities. On the eastern shoreline in El Dorado County, Folsom Point and Brown's Ravine provide boat launch, marina, and picnic facilities. Combined, the primary visitor areas include a 860-slip marina, two guarded swimming beaches, 56 boat launch lanes accommodating the full range of lake levels, 69 campsites, and four picnic areas with tables and barbeques. These areas are also the most developed with respect to the provision of visitor services and include food, beach, and boating equipment concessions, 14 restrooms, equestrian staging areas, trailheads, and parking for a total 3,160 vehicles.

The secondary visitor areas on Folsom Lake include Rattlesnake Bar, Salmon Falls/Skunk Hollow, Old Salmon Falls, and the Peninsula. These facilities tend to be less formally developed and cater to a more narrow range of park users. Rattlesnake Bar in Placer County is a boat launch and equestrian staging area on the North Fork of the American River, while Salmon Falls/Skunk Hollow are whitewater raft take-out facilities for private and commercial boaters on the South Fork of the American River in El Dorado County. Old Salmon Falls is a popular equestrian staging area and trailhead. The peninsula includes the main campground in the Unit with 104 campsites and a boat-in day-use area. Combined, the secondary visitor areas provide two boat launch lanes, five restrooms and six vault toilets, trailheads, and parking for 190 vehicles.

Other facilities on Folsom Lake include: informal parking and trailhead access at Sweetwater Creek and New York Creek on Salmon Falls Road in El Dorado County; Mormon Island Wetland Preserve on Green Valley Road at Blue Ravine Road; Observation Point at the southern end of Folsom Dam; and Park Headquarters on Folsom Dam Road at Auburn-Folsom Road. Mormon Island Wetland Preserve represents the only wetland area in the Unit and incorporates a small area of dense riparian habitat along Humbug Creek. Facilities here are minimal and include a small parking area and an unpaved trail and boardwalk through the wetland. Observation Point is a paved area on the water's edge with space for 77 vehicles that provides sweeping views of Folsom Lake and the Sierra Foothills. In the past, this area was a popular place for meeting and fishing; however, the area is now closed to public access and has been since September 11, 2001, due to security concerns associated with Folsom Dam. The Headquarters compound includes the offices of the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) Gold Fields District and the Central California Area Office of the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). The compound also comprises associated maintenance yards and facilities for each agency. The American River Water Education Center—managed by both CDPR and the BOR—is also located here and provides tours, exhibits, and interactive activities that explore the watershed of the American River.

Recreation Uses –Lake Natoma

As with the recreation areas on Folsom Lake, those on Lake Natoma accommodate multiple park users, although in a setting that is much less intense. Since Lake Natoma represents the afterbay of Folsom Dam, it is essentially a wide spot in the American River. The lake is long, linear, narrow, and highly scenic. The waters are quiet and sheltered making it an ideal location for paddling and rowing, swimming, and fishing. And since water levels vary by

only 4 to 7 feet, the shoreline is densely riparian and not exposed as it is on Folsom Lake. The lake is entirely surrounded by urban development.

Major facilities on the Lake include Negro Bar, Nimbus Flat, and the California State University Sacramento (CSUS) Aquatic Center. Negro Bar, the most popular day-use area on the lake, includes a full range of facilities including a swim beach, picnic area, group campground, boat launch, and equestrian staging area. Located in the City of Folsom, the area is urban park-like with 3 restrooms, boating equipment concession, and parking for 400 vehicles. The Nimbus Flat day-use area is located on the eastern shore of the lake just above Nimbus Dam in unincorporated Sacramento County. The area includes two small unguarded beaches, picnic area, personal watercraft dock, two restrooms, and a parking area for 230 vehicles. Since Nimbus Flat is located adjacent to the CSUS Aquatic Center, it is often used as an observation and overflow parking area for various aquatic competitions hosted by CSUS. The Aquatic Center provides the base for Sac State's water ski and rowing clubs teams and aquatic courses and offers a full range of public courses in sailing, windsurfing, jet skiing, kayaking, rowing, canoeing, etc., as well as youth programs and summer camps. Facilities here include an administrative building with offices and classrooms, several equipment storage buildings, three launch docks with mooring areas, a small beach area, and a large paved parking area with access off Hazel Avenue. The Center is currently undergoing an expansion project that includes a new administrative building with locker rooms, classrooms, and storage, and a new boathouse and dock.

Secondary facilities on Lake Natoma include Willow Creek, Lake Overlook, and Mississippi Bar. Located on the eastern shore of the lake off Folsom Boulevard, the Willow Creek area is a popular fishing, canoeing, picnicking, bird watching, and trailhead location. Facilities are minimal and include a small picnic area, canoe and kayak concession, informal boat launch, vault toilets, and a gravel parking area for 20 vehicles. Lake Overlook is located high above the north end of Nimbus Dam off Hazel Avenue and is essentially undeveloped. Offering sweeping views of Lake Natoma, the Sierra Foothills, and the Sacramento Valley, this location includes two parking areas (one paved) with a capacity of about 150 vehicles, and an equestrian staging area. Mississippi Bar is a sprawling area of undeveloped land along the western shoreline of the lake between Lake Overlook and Negro Bar. It is comprised of dredge tailings—large piles of cobblestones—resulting form early gold exploration and more recent aggregate mining. The area also includes several lagoons and ponds, some of which are accessible by canoe or kayak from Lake Natoma. The area is bisected by informal horse riding trails from users of the Shadow Glen Stables nearby.

Other facilities on Lake Natoma include the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park. Located at the intersection of Riley and Scott Streets in the City of Folsom, the powerhouse is one of the oldest hydroelectric facilities in the world and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The facility includes the main powerhouse and associated buildings (including a gift shop), picnic area, restrooms, and a small parking areas for 35 vehicles. The powerhouse is a key interpretive attraction in the Unit and includes an active docent program. Planned improvements to the facility include seismic upgrades, larger parking area with room for buses, and a new visitor center to be located on the north side of the park entrance.

Non-Recreation Uses

Non-recreation land uses within the Unit are associated with Folsom and Nimbus Dams. In 1956, construction of these dams by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was completed, resulting in the creation of Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma. The dams and lakes are designed as part of the massive Central Valley Project, a network of dams, reservoirs, canals, powerplants, and pumping plants extending over 500 miles south from the Cascade Mountains and 100 miles west from the Sierra Foothills to the Coastal Range. Responsibility for the operation of these facilities belongs to the BOR.

Folsom Dam is 1,400 feet long and 340 feet high.[3] This concrete structure is flanked by earthfill wing dams and dikes to close the reservoir with a total length of about nine miles.[4] Although the primary function of Folsom Dam is flood control, the reservoir stores water for irrigation and domestic use and for electrical power generation. Folsom Dam includes three generators capable of producing more than 198,000 kilowatts of power.[5] The dam also plays a role in the preservation of the American River fishery and the downstream control of salt water intrusion in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Nimbus Dam is located 7 miles downstream from Folsom Dam. Nimbus Dam represents the afterbay structure for Folsom Dam – the afterbay being Lake Natoma. The dam, which measures almost 1,100 feet in length and 76 feet in height, is designed to re-regulate flows into the American River and to generate electricity from water releases.[6] Nimbus Dam includes two generators capable of producing more than 15,520 kilowatts of power. The various uses of water in the system, and the allocation of quantities, is carefully orchestrated and involves several federal, State, and local agencies. Since Folsom Lake is a reservoir, water levels normally vary from about 466 feet in early summer to about 426 feet in early winter. Since Lake Natoma is a regulating reservoir, water levels vary between 4 and 7 feet.

Relationship of Recreation and Non-Recreation Uses

Recreation use in the Unit is closely related to the function of Folsom Lake as a reservoir since water levels directly affect the availability of boat ramps, beaches, mooring sites, and other facilities that depend largely on water depth or surface area. As noted, these levels can vary greatly, although much less so on Lake Natoma. There are several projects and proposals in the works that will affect the operation of Folsom Dam and water levels on the reservoir.

Water Forum Agreement

The first is the Water Forum Agreement (WFA). The Water Forum comprises a diverse group of stakeholders representing water-related interests in the cities of Sacramento, Folsom, Galt, Citrus Heights and Roseville, the County of Sacramento, South Placer County, and western El Dorado County. The objectives of the WFA are to provide a reliable and safe water supply for the region's economic health and planned development through the year 2030 and to preserve the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the Lower

[3] http://www.mp.usbr.gov/arwec/water_education/folsom.htm
[4] Ibid.
[5] http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=882.
[6] http://www.mp.usbr.gov/arwec/water_education/nimbus.htm

American River. The WFA represents a comprehensive package of linked actions to make more water available for consumption while protecting the natural resources of the Lower American River from environmental damage.[7]

The WFA provides for increased surface water diversions to meet planned growth in the area through 2030 and assurances that customer demand may be met in dry years. It is expected that compared to current conditions, the increased diversions would result in lower water levels on Folsom Lake and directly affect boating and swimming opportunities in the Unit.[8] Essentially, the lower water levels would reduce the availability of boat ramps, marina slips, and beaches during the peak season. Recreation uses on Lake Natoma would not be affected. The WFA proposes several measures to mitigate the impacts on recreation uses in the Unit. These could include:

- Construction of boating facilities to increase access and reservoir use during higher water periods in compensation for the reduced availability of facilities during low water periods. Projects could include new facilities at Dike 8 and New York Cove;

- Facility improvements at the marina area to enhance operations during sufficiently high water periods in compensation for the reduced availability of wet slips during low water periods; [9]

- Construction of water impoundments using earthfill dams at Beals Point, Dike 8, and/or Granite Bay to provide dependable swimming opportunities close to existing facilities regardless of water levels; and

- Landside improvements to support other recreation uses, such as trail extensions, in compensation for reduced swimming opportunities, or improvements to shoreline facilities, such as parking areas, concession facilities, and beaches to improve low water access.[10]

Under the WFA, at least $3 million in new funding is to be secured by Water Forum members by 2008 and given over to CDPR to implement these improvements.[11]

Folsom Dam Modification Project

In February 1986, a series of winter storms caused record floodflows in the American River basin. Outflows from Folsom Lake combined with high flows on the Sacramento River resulted in water levels reaching the safety capacity of the levees that protect metropolitan Sacramento.[12] In January 1997, storm events created the largest precipitation peaks ever recorded on the American and Sacramento rivers. These events raised significant concern over the adequacy of the existing flood control system and led to a series of investigations by

[7] City-County Office of Metropolitan Water Planning, Water Forum Proposal EIR, 1999, pg. 2-2.
[8] Ibid., pg. 2-43.
[9] Ibid., pg. 2-44, 2-45.
[10] Ibid., pg. 2-46 to 2-48.
[11] Water Forum, Water Forum Agreement, January 2000, pg. 32.
[12] State of California Reclamation Board and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *Final Environmental Assessment/Initial Study: American River Watershed, California, Folsom Dam Modification Project,* August 2001, pg. 2.

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), the State Reclamation Board, and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) into the need for improved flood protection for the Sacramento area.[13] Several proposals put forward by the agencies were authorized by U.S. Congress, including the Folsom Dam Modification Project in 1999.

This project is intended to reduce the probability of flooding in Sacramento in any year from 1 chance in 85 to 1 chance in 140.[14] The first phase of the project will involve enlarging the eight existing river outlets at Folsom Dam to permit increased release capacity. Construction is expected to begin in early 2003 and be completed in about six years. In addition to the outlet modifications, the Army Corps will modify the use of surcharge storage in Folsom Lake—using both operational and physical means—to allow non-damaging releases to occur at Folsom Dam while allowing water levels in Folsom Lake to reach up to 474 feet.[15] Changes to existing emergency release operations would reflect the new flood surcharge elevation of 474 feet for releases. Physical modifications to the dam itself would include the replacement of the three emergency spillway gates to allow an additional 3 feet of headroom above the new flood surcharge elevation of 474 feet.[16] In addition, an advance release strategy will be developed based on improved weather forecasts using the Advanced Hydrologic Prediction System of the National Weather Service. Under this strategy, the BOR would act on a five-day forecast of high flow to increase releases and accommodate incoming flood volumes.

The physical modifications to the dam will impact the recreation uses at Folsom Lake to some degree. First, since the modifications will increase the flood protection capacity of Folsom Lake, increased lake levels that are beyond the current functional range of the swimming beaches at Beals Point and Granite Bay will occur during large flood events. However, since flood events occur during winter months when the beaches are not used, impacts are likely to be minimal. It should be noted that several facilities on Folsom Lake would be completely or partially inundated under the current maximum flood control level of 474 feet. Impacts will also occur as a result of construction. For instance, Observation Point at the eastern end of Folsom Dam will be used as a staging area for necessary dredging operations during the winter months over a three-year period. Although Observation Point is currently closed due to security concerns, the use of this area for this project certainly precludes its use for recreation purposes. Folsom Dam Road is now indefinitely closed to the public, which affects visitor access to the Unit.

Folsom Dam Raise Project

Despite the improvements associated with the Folsom Dam Modification Project, the ACOE, the BOR, and SAFCA have determined that Folsom Dam will not meet current federal dam safety standards without failure. As a result, these agencies have proposed to raise Folsom Dam by seven feet and increase the maximum flood pool water elevation to from 474 feet to 482 feet.[17] The effect would be the addition of 95,000 acre-feet of storage capacity to Folsom

[13] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers *et al., Final Supplemental Plan Formulation Report/EIS/EIR: American River Watershed, California, Long-term Study*, February 2002, pg. S-1.
[14] Ibid., pg. 8.
[15] Ibid., pg. 11.
[16] Ibid., pg. 11.
[17] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers *et al.*, pg. S-7.

Lake and a reduction in the probability of flooding in Sacramento in any year to 1 chance in 213.

The dam raise is a significant project with significant construction and operational impacts on recreation use in the Unit. Key components of the project include:

- Enlargement of all eight existing spillway gates;
- Modification of spillway bridge piers and replacement of spillway bridge;
- Construction of a concrete parapet wall to raise Folsom Dam;
- Raising of wing dams and dikes by 3.5 feet with embankment material;
- Extraction of materials for embankments from the Peninsula area and Mississippi Bar with hauling by barge and truck along local roadways (including the use of Willow Creek as a material storage and transfer site);
- Staging of construction equipment on landsite sites at dams and dikes being raised; and
- Construction of a temporary bridge downstream from Folsom Dam to provide a detour of Folsom Dam Road during construction (the BOR is pursuing funding for construction of a bridge that would permanently relocate traffic from Folsom Dam).

Significant impacts on recreation uses in the Unit resulting from construction activities associated with the dam raise project are expected, including the disruption of recreation activities between Beals Point and Beeks Bight on Folsom Lake due to dike construction and on Lake Natoma due to the temporary conversion of the Willow Creek area to a borrow material storage and transfer site.[18] More specifically, these impacts include:

- Disruption of recreation activities on the American River Bike Trail between Negro Bar and Beals Point due to the construction of temporary access roads and bridges;
- Relocation of the CDPR and BOR headquarters complex to accommodate the western landing of the temporary construction bridge under the proposed alignment;
- Disruption of recreation activities between Beals Point and Beeks Bight due to construction activities associated with increasing the height of dikes along the western shoreline of Folsom Lake;
- Disruption of recreation activities on the American River Bike Trail at Mississippi Bar due to the transport of borrow material from the site to the barge loading site at Willow Creek across Lake Natoma; and
- Disruption of recreation activities at Lake Natoma at Willow Creek due to the temporary use of the site as a borrow material storage and transfer site.[19]

[18] Ibid., pg. S-16.
[19] Ibid., pg. S-18.

Once completed, the dam raise project could have operational impacts on recreation uses in the Unit. Currently, CDPR assumes a maximum water level of 466 feet on Folsom Lake for recreation facilities, operations, and planning purposes, although current flood control operations could result in a temporary water level of 475 feet in a very large flood event.[20] Most CDPR facilities on Folsom Lake are at elevations of between 468 and 474 feet. Although a flood event large enough to inundate these facilities has not occurred in the American River watershed in the last 100 years, the dam raise project is intended to further reduce the potential of such an event occurring. The dam raise project would increase the temporary water level that could be accommodated to 482 feet, a level that would completely inundate all recreation facilities on Folsom Lake rendering them inoperable. While the likelihood of such a scenario is minimal, the various upgrades associated with the dam raise project will reduce potential flood damage on Folsom Lake caused by a more likely flood event that could result in water levels that reach existing recreation facilities. In any case, the General Plan/Resource Management Plan for the Unit will have to consider the potential for such flood events to occur and what effects they would have on recreation facilities and operations.

Land Ownership in the Unit

The CDPR and the BOR are currently working to resolve Unit boundary issues before mapping and analysis regarding ownership can be completed using the new GIS being developed as part of the General Plan update project. Once these issues have been resolved, a brief discussion of ownership within the Unit by these agencies will be inserted here.

Land Use Surrounding the Unit

The following discussion provides a summary of land use surrounding the Unit, as illustrated in Figures LU-1 and LU-2. The discussion is organized by municipal jurisdiction.

Placer County

The northwestern portion of the Unit is located within unincorporated Placer County. The southeastern portion of the County is the focus for urban development, accommodating significant growth that is changing the historical pattern of agriculture in the area. In general, land uses in the County that abut the Unit decrease in intensity from south to north. Moving north from the Sacramento County line, Auburn-Folsom Road serves as both the boundary and buffer between urban residential development and the Unit; however, as the roadway and the Folsom Lake shoreline diverge at Eureka Road, urban residential development closes in on Unit lands and puts competing uses in close proximity. This is particularly true at Granite Bay, where the highest density residential development—about 4 units per acre—in the County abuts the Unit. North of Granite Bay, residential densities thin out and the character of development is more rural than urban. In the area of Horseshoe Bar, residential development occurs on 5-acre lots. Further north in the area of Rattlesnake Bar and beyond, residential densities are at about 1 unit per 100 acres with small hobby farms and equestrian uses. Most of the lands in the County that provide views of Folsom Lake have been developed, particularly in the Lakeshore area on the ridge above the western shoreline of the North Fork of the American River between Granite Bay and Horseshoe Bar. As a result,

[20] Ibid., pg. 12-31.

visible residential development abutting the Unit in this area appears to be more intense than it really is.

El Dorado County

The northeastern portion of the Unit is located within unincorporated El Dorado County. As in Placer County across Folsom Lake to the west, the lands that abut the Unit are in urban and rural residential development with densities decreasing from south to north. The most concentrated urban residential development abuts the Folsom Lake Marina at Brown's Ravine and extends from Unit lands northeast to New York Creek. The majority of this area is characterized by single family development at densities of up to 7 units per acre and include among others the Marina Village, Lakehills Estates, and Summit Village developments. The area northeast of Lakehills Drive to New York Creek—on Iron Mountain at Shoreline Pointe—is comprised of larger residential estates on 5 and 10-acre lots. This form of development continues along Salmon Falls Road to the South Fork crossing at Skunk Hollow, although with more intense 1 and 3-acre lot subdivisions in the area surrounding Old Salmon Falls on Falcon Crest Lane and Hidden Bridge Road. In the Peninsula, the lands abutting the Unit are largely undeveloped and consist of oak-studded hillsides suitable for grazing. However, this area has been zoned by the County for a mix of 40-acre rural residential development, 10-acre estate residential, and open space.

Sacramento County

The southern half of the Unit—from the bottom of Folsom Lake south on Lake Natoma to Nimbus Dam—is located in Sacramento County, although the majority of this area falls within the City of Folsom. Unincorporated Sacramento County abuts the Unit south of the Madison Avenue/Greenback Lane intersection in Orangevale on the west side of Lake Natoma and south of the Folsom Avenue/Highway 50 intersection in Rancho Cordova on the east side. In Orangevale, low density residential development abuts the Unit from Negro Bar and the Lake Natoma Bluffs south along Mississippi Bar to Lake Overlook above Nimbus Dam. In Rancho Cordova, Highway 50 south of Folsom Boulevard separates the Unit from highway commercial and industrial uses that extend along this route to the Hazel Avenue interchange at Nimbus Flat.

City of Folsom

As noted, the majority of the southern half of the Unit is located in the City of Folsom. On the western side of the American River, the City extends south from the Placer County line to the intersection of Madison Avenue and Greenback Lane at Negro Bar. On the eastern side of the River, the City extends south from the El Dorado County line to the Highway 50/Folsom Boulevard interchange at Museum Flat. With the exception of commercial development at the intersections of Folsom-Auburn Road/Greenback Lane and Madison Avenue/Greenback Lane, the lands that abut the Unit along the western side of the American River are in single family residential development. More intense, larger-scale development abuts Unit lands along its eastern boundary in the City. For instance, the 1,200-acre Folsom State Prison and California State Prison, Sacramento site is located immediately south of Folsom Dam.

Figure LU-1: Land Use Surrounding Folsom Lake

Figure LU-2: Land Use Surrounding Lake Natoma

These facilities hold more than 4,200 inmates and employ almost 2,000 staff. The location and size of the Folsom Dam and prison sites serves to buffer the southern lakeshore from the encroachment of residential development, which is confined to areas east of East Natoma Street.

The Unit abuts historic Downtown Folsom, a compact 5- by 3-block retail area, along Leidesdorff and Riley streets. This area includes a shopping complex and lakeside hotel at Leidesdorff and Folsom Boulevard. South of Downtown, Folsom Boulevard serves, for the most part, as a boundary and buffer between the Unit and urban development. The exceptions here are the residential subdivision at Young Wo Circle and the campus industrial/office park in the area of Parkshore Drive and Blue Ravine Road. Although both areas back onto the Unit, they are relatively well concealed by the topography and dense shoreline vegetation. Further south, Folsom Boulevard again separates the Unit from intense commercial development associated with the factory outlet shopping center between Natoma Station Drive and Iron Point Road. South of this area, Folsom Boulevard and Highway 50 converge and the Highway runs along Unit lands to Hazel Avenue in unincorporated Sacramento County. Almost 3,600 acres of land in this area south of Highway 50 was added to the City's Sphere of Influence in June 2001, meaning that the City could eventually annex the area and approve development. The Sacramento County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) estimates the area could accommodate 29 million square feet of office space or 12,000 homes and 9.5 million square feet of commercial space.[21]

As noted, the urban residential development that abuts the Unit in Folsom is essentially low density single-family residential. The City has recently rezoned several parcels across the city to multi-family residential as a means of increasing housing affordability. Two of the rezoned parcels are near the Unit, including a site east of Lake Natoma on Folsom Boulevard at Glenn Drive across from the Unit, and a site west of the American River Gorge below Folsom Dam on Folsom-Auburn Road at Berry Creek Drive.

Unit Interface with Surrounding Lands

The interface of the Unit with the surrounding lands raises several complex issues, most of which relate to the proximity of urban and rural development to the Unit. These issues include land use and intensity, visual intrusion, access, noise, and wildfire hazard. Ownership of surrounding lands is also summarized.

Land Use and Intensity

As noted in the discussion above, the majority of urban and rural development surrounding the Unit is residential in nature and of low intensity and scale. The exceptions are more intense commercial uses that abut the Unit in the City of Folsom. The main issue here is the compatibility of these land uses at their interface with the Unit. Currently, single family residential is the predominant land use abutting the Unit. According to the general plans of the surrounding jurisdictions, this situation is not expected to change during the long-term planning horizon of the Unit's new General Plan. With the exception of recreation, open space, and agricultural uses, single family residential is the most compatible use at the Unit

[21] Mike McCarthy, *Sacramento Business Journal,* "Quietly, owners begin to push south of US 50," December 7, 2001.

interface. This use typically reflects low maximum building heights (25-45 feet), large yard setbacks (20-30 feet), and low maximum lot coverage by buildings (25-35 percent). Some areas of commercial development abut the Unit in the City of Folsom. For the most part, the intensity of these uses is such that compatibility is not a significant concern. In general, the simple buffering and screening of these uses softens the interface between the Unit and development. While issues associated with visual intrusion, access, noise, wildfire hazards, etc., do result from the interface of the Unit with surrounding lands, these issues are more easily managed than instances of significant incompatibility.

Visual Intrusion

As noted in the Aesthetic, Visual, and Scenic Resources section of this document, the visual intrusion of development is directly related to the proximity of development to the Unit. Visual intrusion occurs when park users can see outside development from within the Unit, a situation that is particularly common in areas where the ridgelines and hillsides above the Unit boundary are developed or where inadequately buffered or screened development abuts the Unit boundary. Visual intrusion affects the character and feel of the Unit for park users and their perception of place. While some park users may not seek solitude from the outside world in their recreational pursuits, those who do must travel to the far undeveloped reaches of the Unit. Noted examples of visual intrusion in the Unit include Nimbus Flat, Lake Overlook, Beals Point, Mormon Island Dam, Brown's Ravine, New York Creek, and Old Salmon Falls.

Access

Access is also an important issue at the interface of the Unit with surrounding lands. One issue relates to the impacts on adjacent development caused by Unit recreation facilities reaching capacity. Between 1.5 and 2 million people visit the Unit each year, and as noted in the Recreation Resources section of this document, several facilities in the Unit reach capacity by midday on peak season weekends. These facilities include Beals Point, Granite Bay, Brown's Ravine, and Salmon Falls/Skunk Hollow. As the parking lots at these day-use facilities reach capacity, traffic will backup along entrance roads and onto major access routes and local streets. This results in traffic delays, illegal parking, pedestrian hazards, noise, and access difficulties for neighbors of the Unit. A second issue is informal access to the Unit from abutting neighborhoods. In several locations, CDPR staff report that homeowners with property backing onto Unit lands will often add a gate to the fence along the property line to access the Unit, particularly in locations where trail facilities are in close proximity to private property. In other instances, homeowners will completely remove property line fencing and extend their yard use into the Unit. Finally, in very few instances, homeowners will use Unit lands as a dump site for yard waste and personal refuse.

Noise

There are locations at the interface of the Unit and surrounding lands where noise is an issue. In these locations, park users are affected by noise coming from beyond the Unit or neighbors are affected by noise coming from within the Unit. For park users, noise coming from outside the Unit is limited to those locations proximate to major routes parallel or cross the Unit. These locations include Nimbus Flat on Lake Natoma where Highway 50 and Hazel Avenue pass close by, and Negro Bar in the area of the Lake Natoma Crossing. For neighbors, noise coming from inside the Unit is generally the result of traffic backups at

popular day use facilities that reach capacity on peak season weekends, and from water-based activities on Folsom Lake. The noise from power boats and jetskis on Folsom Lake can travel great distances depending upon atmospheric conditions and wind direction. In addition, music coming from boats moored or floating in nearshore areas can generate complaints from lakeside neighbors, particularly in the lower reaches of the North and South Forks of the American River.

Wildfire Hazard

The proximity of development to the natural areas of the Unit raises the issue of wildfire safety, particularly in the northern portions of the Unit along the North and South Forks of the American River. In these more remote rural areas of unincorporated Placer and El Dorado counties, emergency response times higher, and the natural landscape within the Unit poses the highest risk of wildfires. While a fire management plan will be prepared concurrently with the General Plan update for the Unit, the proximity of development to natural areas does increase the risk of potential loss due to wildfires.

Ownership

The ownership characteristics of larger parcels (greater than 10 acres) that abut the Unit boundary is an important consideration for potential acquisition opportunities. The majority of large parcels that abut the Unit boundary are in private ownership. The largest parcels are generally located along the eastern shoreline of the North Fork of the American River, in the Peninsula area, along the northern shoreline of the South Fork, and in the area of Old Salmon Falls. Along the North Fork, several parcels measure between 100 and 200 acres each, with two parcels exceeding 400 acres in size. Of these parcels, approximately 1,500 acres are held by three owners. In the Peninsula area, parcels range between 10 and 20 acres and are in multiple ownership. In the area of the North Fork, approximately 1,600 acres are held by three owners. In the Old Salmon Falls area, 320 acres are under single ownership. Smaller but still sizeable parcels (between 15 and 40 acres) in private ownership also abut the Unit along the western shoreline of the North Fork. Acquisition of property abutting the Unit in the areas described here could be used to protect the natural and scenic resources that exist in these more remote and untouched areas.

Major Projects

Several major projects are proposed or approved in the area proximate to the Unit. These projects are summarized below.

Hazel Avenue Widening

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is currently underway on the proposed widening of Hazel Avenue in Sacramento County. Hazel Avenue is a four-lane arterial that extends from Folsom Boulevard north to the Placer County line and provides one of the limited number of American River crossings for both Sacramento County and regional travel. The roadway crosses the American River just below Nimbus Dam and is the only route providing access to Nimbus Flat and Lake Overlook. The proposed project would widen the roadway to six lanes with a landscaped center median and parkway feature, Class II bike lane in each direction,

and improved access points for pedestrians and cyclists to the American River Parkway.[22] It has not yet been determined if the Hazel Avenue bridge across the American River will be widened to accommodate all traffic, including bicycles and pedestrians, or if a separate and parallel bridge for recreational pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian use will be built.[23] The environmental review and public comment period on the project began in summer of 2002 and is expected be completed by the summer of 2004. Once the design process is complete, construction would begin in summer 2005.

Downtown Sacramento-Folsom Corridor Project

The Sacramento Regional Transit District has begun construction of its Downtown Sacramento-Folsom Corridor light rail transit (LRT) project. This project will improve public transit service in the rapidly growing Highway 50 corridor, enhance regional connectivity, alleviate increasing traffic congestion, and improve mobility options for employment centers along the corridor.[24] The Highway 50 corridor is experiencing rapid growth in both population and employment with the greatest proportion of growth occurring in the City of Folsom. The corridor contains 25 percent of the County population but almost 50 percent of the County employment.[25] Growth along the Highway 50 corridor has resulted in significant traffic congestion, especially along major arterials that serve the corridor during peak times, such as Folsom Boulevard and Hazel Avenue.

Three LRT stations will be located in Folsom, including: Iron Point Station between Iron Point Road and Natoma Station Drive; Silverbrook Station south of Glenn Drive on Folsom Boulevard; and Historic Folsom Station between the Sutter Street off-ramp and the recently re-constructed Leidesdorff Street.[26] The Iron Point Station will include two park-and-ride lots designed by the City of Folsom to accommodate 240 vehicles. The Silverbrook Station will include a park-and-ride lot for 190 vehicles. Historic Folsom Station will be integrated with a parking lot and other facilities planned by the City as part of the historic Railroad Block Master Plan. Both the Iron Point and Silverbrook stations will be located on the southern side of Folsom Boulevard directly across the roadway from the Unit boundary and will significantly improve transit access to the Unit.

Auburn-Folsom Road Widening

A recent study completed by Placer County found that in 1995, just under half of all trips on Auburn-Folsom Road in the southeastern quadrant of the County were through trips, i.e. neither trip end was in southeastern Placer County. The study also found that by 2020, the amount of through traffic on Auburn-Folsom Road is expected to increase by almost 200 percent.[27] Auburn-Folsom Road and connecting arterials—such as Douglas Boulevard—are currently congested during peak travel times causing delays and neighborhood traffic problems associated with short cutting. In addition, bikeway facilities are lacking. At this

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[22] Community Advisory Committee of the Hazel Avenue Corridor Study, *Hazel Avenue Corridor Study Report to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors*, June, 11, 2002, pg. 12.
[23] Ibid., pg. 13.
[24] Sacramento Regional Transit District, *Downtown Sacramento-Folsom Corridor Final EIS/EIR*, March 2000, pg. S-2.
[25] Ibid., pg. 2.
[26] http://www.sacrt.com/Extensions/Folsom_Line/folsom_line.html.
[27] Placer County, *Southeast Placer County Transportation Study*, November 2000, pg. 1.

time, the City of Folsom proposes to widen Folsom-Auburn Road from two to four lanes from Folsom Dam Road north to the Placer County line with completion expected in late 2003. In addition, Placer County proposes to widen Auburn-Folsom Road from two lanes to four lanes from the Sacramento County line north to Douglas Boulevard with an anticipated completion year of 2006. These projects should enhance access to the Unit at both Beals Point and Granite Bay and may ease traffic impacts that result from these recreation facilities reaching capacity on peak season weekends.

Folsom Dam Bridge

As noted in the Folsom Dam Raise Project discussion above, a temporary two-lane construction bridge approximately 2,400 feet in length will be constructed downstream from Folsom Dam. The bridge will be aligned to provide a detour route across the American River during the construction period when the spillway bridge would be unavailable for public use.28 Approximately 4 million vehicles cross Folsom Dam each year. The proposed alignment, located entirely within BOR land, would begin at the existing Folsom Dam Road/Folsom-Auburn Road intersection in the west and reconnect with Folsom Dam Road just east of the Folsom Dam. This alignment would require the removal and relocation of the CDPR and BOR headquarters complex on Folsom Dam Road. After completion of the dam raise, traffic would revert to the new spillway bridge over Folsom Dam and the construction bridge would either be dismantled or left in service to facilitate dam maintenance. As noted, funding is being pursued for construction of a bridge that would permanently relocate traffic from Folsom Dam. A permanent structure would likely be built to four or six lanes.

Local Planning Policy Context

This section summarizes the relevant land use plans and policies of local jurisdictions as they relate to the Unit. These jurisdictions include Placer, El Dorado, and Sacramento Counties, and the City of Folsom.

Placer County

As noted in the "Land Use Surrounding the Unit" section above, the Unit is divided north-south between Placer and El Dorado Counties. The western half of the Unit is located in Placer County. Several countywide general plan policies relate to the Unit. In addition, two community plan areas—Granite Bay and Horseshoe Bar/Penryn—relate specifically to the majority of the unincorporated County lands that abut the western boundary of the Unit. As with the countywide general plan policies, the community plan policies that relate to the Unit are summarized here.

Countywide Policies

While no policies in the 1994 Placer County General Plan directly relate to the Unit, several key policies are relevant and could affect the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR. These policies include the following:

[28] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers *et al.*, pg. S-15.

Recreation and Trails

- The County shall work with other public agencies to coordinate the development of equestrian, pedestrian, and bicycle trails.

- The County shall encourage federal, state, and local agencies currently providing recreation facilities to maintain, at a minimum, and improve, if possible, their current levels of service.

- The County shall support development of a countywide trail system. Whenever possible, trails should connect to the county wide trail system, regional trails, and the trail or bikeways plans of cities.

Flooding and Water Quality

- The County shall encourage the protection of floodplain lands and where appropriate, acquire public easements for purposes of flood protection, public safety, wildlife preservation, groundwater recharge, access and recreation.

- The County shall support efforts to acquire land or obtain easements for drainage and other public uses of floodplains where it is desirable to maintain drainage channels in a natural state.

- The County shall protect the watersheds of all bodies of water associated with the storage and delivery of domestic water by limiting grading, construction of impervious surfaces, application of fertilizers, and development of septic systems within these watersheds.

- The County shall require new development to adequately mitigate increases in stormwater peak flows and/or volume. Mitigation measures should take into consideration impacts on adjoining lands in the unincorporated area and on properties in jurisdictions within and immediately adjacent to Placer County.

- The County shall support and cooperate with efforts of other local, state, and federal agencies and private entities engaged in the preservation and protection of significant biological resources from incompatible land uses and development. Significant biological resources include endangered, threatened, or rare species and their habitats, wetland habitats, wildlife migration corridors, and locally-important species/communities.

- The County shall cooperate with, encourage, and support the plans of other public agencies to acquire fee title or conservation easements to privately-owned lands in order to preserve important wildlife corridors and to provide habitat protection of California Species of Concern and state or federally listed rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species.

- The County shall support the preservation of outstanding areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.

- The County shall ensure the conservation of sufficiently large, continuous expanses of native vegetation to provide suitable habitat for maintaining abundant and diverse wildlife.

- The County shall support the preservation and enhancement of natural land forms, natural vegetation and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible. The County shall permanently protect, as open space, areas of natural resource value, including wetlands preserves, riparian corridors, woodlands, and floodplains.

- The County shall coordinate with local, state and federal agencies and private organizations to establish visual and physical links among open space areas to form a system that, where appropriate, includes trails. Dedication of easements shall be encouraged, and in many cases, required as lands are developed and built.

Placer Legacy

The Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program is intended to protect and conserve open space and agricultural lands in Placer County.[29] The program has been developed to implement the goals, policies and programs of the 1994 Placer County General Plan. The program will: maintain agricultural uses; protect plant and animal diversity; protect and expand recreation areas; protect scenic and historically significant areas and sites; establish open-space buffers between communities; and ensure public safety. The program is both voluntary and non-regulatory and remains a priority for the County. Last year, $1.3 million was set aside for land acquisition purposes and $3 million in grant funding was obtained.[30] To date, the program has, among other things, resulted in the planning for protection and improvement of seven watersheds in western Placer County, the development of a GIS that allows detailed mapping and analysis, the development of strategies to protect, restore, and enhance natural areas, and focused efforts on grant funding, voluntary donations, and public/private sector partnerships.[31]

Community Plan Policies

The Granite Bay and Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plans address almost the entire extent of the lands in unincorporated Placer County that directly abut the Unit's west side. These plans are currently being updated by the County to reflect current population and transportation trends. The following lists the policies that relate to the Unit by community plan.

Granite Bay Community Plan

Adopted in 1989, the Granite Bay Community Plan affects lands abutting the Unit from the Sacramento County line in the south to Dick Cook Road in the north. This plan is currently being updated by the County. Several key policies are relevant to the Unit and could affect

[29] Placer County Planning Department, *Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program*, June 2000, pg. 1.
[30] http://www.placer.ca.gov/planning/legacy/legacy.htm.
[31] Ibid.

the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR. These policies include the following:[32]

Recreation and Trails

- Coordinate the development of trails and other recreation facilities with other public agencies such as CDPR.

- Trails and paths intended for general circulation shall provide reasonably direct and convenient routes of travel for potential users. Routes for trails and paths intended primarily for recreational use should enhance the recreation experience. Regional trails are needed for inter-community travel and to provide access to state and county parks. Regional trails should be located so that they serve the needs of the public and minimize any infringement on the privacy of local residents.

- Regional bikeways should facilitate travel between communities and provide access to parks. Regional bikeways should be located on or along collector or arterial roads. County or state funds should be sought for construction of regional bikeways.

- The local public path and trail system shall be linked with the existing private and regional systems and the road system.

Flooding and Water Quality

- Encourage compatible recreational use of riparian areas along streams and creeks in the area where feasible.

- Care shall be taken in the development and use of lands in the Granite Bay area to protect the community and downstream communities against excessive stormwater runoff, flooding, air and water pollution, erosion, fire, landslides and other natural hazards.

- Urban/suburban development within the Folsom Lake Watershed shall be strongly discouraged. Water quality of Folsom Lake shall be monitored.

Open Space and Environmental Management

- Retention of open space shall be considered in the review of all applications for development.

- Valuable natural features, such as rolling terrain, streams, and stream corridors, scenic corridors, meadowlands, ridge tops, and significant stands of trees shall be preserved and protected through imaginative planning, good conservation practices and, where appropriate, the dedication of open space, conservation or scenic easements.

- Those areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature, e.g. areas of rare or endangered species of plants, riparian areas, etc., shall be avoided in land development.

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[32] Placer County, *Granite Bay Community Plan*, May 1989.

Where necessary, in order to preserve these areas, they should be publicly acquired to ensure protection.

- Blocks of undisturbed oak woodlands and annual grassland habitat that have significant value to wildlife shall be preserved as Open Space, Resource Conservation Zones, or the equivalent, where an appropriate mechanism to do so can be identified.

- Open spaces should be linked visually and physically to form a system of open spaces. Where appropriate, trails shall connect open space areas. Dedication of easements shall be encouraged or required as lands are developed and built.

Scenic Resources

- A variety of vistas shall be provided and preserved, ranging from the small enclosed private views to the more distant views shared by many people.

- Scenic or conservation easements over properties adjacent to the roadway may be needed to ensure preservation of a vista from the road and to preserve the natural, rural character of the community.

Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan

The 1994 Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan affects lands north of Dick Cook Road to just south of the unincorporated community of Newcastle. This plan is currently being updated by the County. Several key policies are relevant to the Unit and could affect the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR. These policies include the following:[33]

Recreation and Trails

- Develop a multiple-use (i.e. hiking, equestrian, bicycle) trail system to connect local trails to regional trail systems;

- Coordinate the development of trails and other recreation facilities with other public agencies, including the adjoining cities of Rocklin and Loomis.

- Trails should link and be in proximity to residential areas, horse populations, park and recreation areas, schools, major waterways such as rivers and lakes, and major vista locations.

- The local public path and trail system shall be linked with the existing private and regional systems and the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area trail system.

[33] Placer County, *Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan,* August 1994.

Flooding and Water Quality

- Where development at a base zoning density greater than a 4.6-acre minimum parcel size are allowed to occur within the Folsom Lake Watershed, encourage the use of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and/or other mechanisms to locate development as far as possible from the Lake and those drainageways and creeks emptying in the Lake.

- Encourage the use of open space to preserve and enhance the watersheds, stream corridors and wetlands significant to the protection of water resources such as the American River/Folsom Lake, Secret Ravine, Miners Ravine, Antelope Creek, and Mormon Ravine.

- Strongly discourage septic systems on property located within the Folsom Lake Watershed within the service boundaries of Sewer Maintenance District No. 3, as a means of maintaining the water quality of Folsom Lake.

Open Space and Environmental Management

- Natural open space recreation land within the planning area should be carefully managed and its uses controlled to ensure that vegetation, soil, wildlife, and visual qualities are protected and, where necessary, enhanced.

- Reduce the negative impacts on water quality resulting from urban runoff for all commercial, industrial, and residential projects by treating such runoff through application of Best Management Practices before it enters intermittent or permanent streams.

- Conserve large, continuous expanses of native vegetation as the most suitable habitat for maintaining abundant and diverse wildlife.

- Identify and protect important spawning grounds, migratory routes, waterfowl resting areas, oak woodlands, wildlife corridors, and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations.

- Open spaces should be linked visually and physically to form a system of open spaces and recreational uses. Where appropriate, trails shall connect open space areas. Dedication of easements shall be encouraged or required as lands are developed and built.

Scenic Resources

- Structures built within the Folsom Lake Watershed shall be designed to blend in with the surrounding vegetation, and/or be screened so as to not be obtrusive as viewed from the Lake's surface.

Folsom Lake Development Guidelines

- Commercial developments should be prohibited within the Folsom Lake Watershed.

- Wherever possible, residential development densities should be transferred from the Folsom Lake Watershed into a less sensitive watershed (i.e. Miners Ravine), through utilization of the Planned Unit Development concept.

- Where transfers outside the Folsom Lake Watershed are not possible due to limited ownership and other factors, the larger lot sizes of the Plan range should be utilized.

- Wherever possible, require roads and sewers to be located outside the Folsom Lake Watershed.

- Within the Folsom Lake Watershed, require the establishment of water quality management programs within each new project measure (monitor) and to minimize pollutant impacts.

- Where structures, roads, sewer lines, and other improvements are allowed with the Folsom Lake Watershed, require the use of grassy buffers, sedimentation and bio-assimilation ponds, and other "Best Management Practices" to mitigate water quality impacts.

- Within the Folsom Lake Watershed, greater setbacks may be required where there are steep slopes, highly erosive soils, or other factors which may increase the likelihood of development adversely affecting the quality of the water in Folsom Lake. The Division of Environmental Health shall develop criteria to be used to determine when such greater setbacks are appropriate.

- Within the Folsom Lake watershed, allow septic systems only on parcels of 4.6 acres and larger where there is no possibility of extending sewers to serve.

In order to soften the impacts of more dense development upon the most vulnerable parts of the Folsom Lake Watershed, require that those lots closest to the Folsom public property line and the lots adjacent to natural preservation easements be sized toward the largest acreage identified in the general plan designation rather than to the minimum lot size allowable under the zoning. This approach shall also apply in Planned Unit Developments.

El Dorado County

The eastern half of the Unit is located in El Dorado County. The current General Plan was adopted in 1996, but in 1999 the Superior Court, County of Sacramento, in the matter of *El Dorado County Taxpayers from Quality Growth, et al. v. El Dorado County Board of Supervisors and El Dorado County*, ruled that in certain respects the County failed to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in the adoption of the General Plan. As a result, certification of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and adoption of the General Plan were set aside. In response to the Judgement and the Writ of Mandate, the County is proposing to adopt a new General Plan and conduct a full environmental review pursuant to CEQA. It is unclear at this time what effect the new General Plan could have on the Unit. While no policies in the 1996 El Dorado County General Plan directly relate to the Unit, several key policies are relevant and could affect the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR. These policies include the following:

Trails

- Plan bicycle, hiking, and equestrian routes to facilitate access to recreational areas such as regional parks, rivers, and major tourist commercial/recreational facilities.

- Plan a bikeway, hiking, and equestrian network to interface with other modes of transportation (train or transit stations and Park-N-Ride lots, etc.) in order to encourage and support the use of non-motorized transportation modes and reduce the use of motor vehicles.

- Locate regional bikeways, hiking, and equestrian routes along designated scenic highways wherever environmentally, physically, or economically feasible and encourage the development of scenic vista points and rest areas where feasible and appropriate.

- Plan, develop, and maintain a network of Countywide regional trails in both incorporated and unincorporated areas, through cooperative efforts with cities, State and federal government, schools and utility companies.

- Encourage other jurisdictions to adopt a system of bikeway, hiking, and equestrian trails that complement the County system.

- The proposed El Dorado Trail/Pony Express Trail as well as trails connecting regional parks shall be the County's primary responsibility for trail establishment and maintenance.

- Integrate and link, where possible, existing and proposed National, State, regional, County, city and local hiking and equestrian trails for public use.

- Recognize the national historic trails that are located within the County and promote and pursue cooperative efforts with private, regional, State, and Federal agencies to develop and fund these trails on public and private land.

- On public lands and where trails can be developed, maintained, and managed, a system of trails along the American and Cosumnes River system may be created to increase public access to scenic waterways.

- Maintain areas of importance for outdoor recreation including areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes including those providing access to lake shores, beaches and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails and scenic highway corridors.

Recreation and Parks

- The primary responsibilities of the County as a recreation provider shall be the establishment and provision of a regional park system to serve the residents of and visitors to the County.

- Coordinate with Federal, State, other agencies, and private landholders to provide public access to recreational resources, including rivers, lakes, and public lands.

- The River Management Plan, South Fork of the American River, (River Management Plan) is considered the implementation plan for the river management policies of this chapter.

- The County shall study the feasibility of adopting an impact fee schedule and a County-wide benefit assessment district to pay for the acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of regional parks and facilities.

- The County shall actively pursue lands that can be transferred to the County from Federal, State, and other ownerships suitable and needed for public use.

Flooding and Water Quality

- As a means to improve the water quality affecting the County's recreational waters, enhanced and increased detailed analytical water quality studies and monitoring should be implemented to identify and reduce point and non-point pollutants and contaminants. Where such studies or monitoring reports have identified sources of pollution, the County shall propose means to prevent, control, or treat identified pollutants and contaminants.

- Modification of natural stream beds and flow shall be regulated to ensure that adequate mitigation measures are utilized.

Environmental Management

- To the extent feasible in light of other General Plan policies and to the extent permitted by State law, the County of El Dorado will protect identified critical fish and wildlife habitat, as identified on the Important Biological Resources Map maintained at the Planning Department, through any of the following techniques: utilization of open space, Natural Resource land use designation, clustering, large lot design, setbacks, etc.

- Low impact uses such as trails and linear parks may be provided within river and stream buffers if all applicable mitigation measures are incorporated into the design.

- Setbacks from all rivers, streams, and lakes shall be included in the Zoning Ordinance for all ministerial and discretionary development projects.

Sacramento County

The southern portion of the Unit is located in Sacramento County. While no policies in the Sacramento County General Plan directly relate to the Unit, several key policies are relevant and could affect the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR. These policies include the following:

Land Use

- The County shall not approve land use projects which are for noncontiguous development, i.e. leapfrog.

- The County shall coordinate with regional planning agencies setting land use and environmental policies and programs and cooperate in the implementation of programs consistent with General Plan policy.

- Encourage local park districts to collaborate and coordinate with other districts, agencies and organizations.

Open Space

- Permanently protect, as open space, areas of natural resource value, including wetlands preserves, riparian corridors, woodlands and floodplains.

- Maintain open space and natural areas that are interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity accommodate wildlife movement and sustain ecosystems.

Conservation

- Encourage the County and Cities of Folsom, Sacramento, and Galt to jointly participate in a long-term water quality monitoring program for receiving waters within the county.

- Marshland and riparian areas of special significance shall be designated as natural preserves on the General Plan.

- Ensure no net loss of marsh and riparian woodland acreage, values or functions.

- Seasonal and permanent marshland within designated natural preserves shall not be drained or filled for the purpose of converting the land to another use.

- Manage vegetation on public lands with special status species to encourage native species and discourage nonindigenous invasive species.

- Control human access to critical habitat areas on public lands to minimize impact upon and disturbance of threatened and endangered species.

Flood Control

- Encroachments within the designated floodway of Sacramento waterways shall be consistent with policies to protect marsh and riparian areas.

- Reduce bank and levee erosion by prohibiting erosive wake activity generated by recreational and commercial boating.

- Provide unobstructed water flows throughout the network of natural waterways by prohibiting blockage, tunneling, or obstruction of contiguous stream channels.

Scenic Resources

- Locate and design production and distribution facilities so as to minimize visual intrusion problems in urban areas and areas of scenic and/or cultural value including the following: Recreation and historic area; Scenic highways; Landscape corridors; State or federal designated wild and scenic rivers; Visually prominent locations such as ridges, designated scenic corridors, and open viewsheds; Native American sacred sites.

- Solar facilities should be excluded from areas of scenic value and should not be sited in visually prominent locations such as ridges designated scenic corridors, designated historic areas, and open viewsheds.

- Transmission lines should avoid paralleling recreation areas, historic areas, rural scenic highways, landscaped corridors, and designated federal or state wild and scenic river systems.

City of Folsom

The City of Folsom is located along the southern shore of Folsom Lake and straddles Lake Natoma. While no policies in the Folsom General Plan directly relate to the Unit, several key policies are relevant and could affect the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR. These policies include the following:

Land Use

- New development shall preserve and/or enhance to the maximum degree feasible, the existing natural vegetation, landscape features and open space, consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan.

- Development proposed along streams shall be in conformance with a comprehensive development and management plan to be prepared for stream waterbeds prior to project approval.

- The location, configuration, and extent of open space and parkway designated on the land use map shall be determined on a project by project basis through site specific mapping

approved by the City and consistent with the mitigation of environmental impacts and implementation of the overall goals and policies of the General Plan.

- The General Plan and zoning designations for annexed lands should consider the following criteria: 1) The capacity of facilities and municipal services; 2) The environmental effects that development on lands proposed for annexation may have on properties within the existing city limits; 3) Existing land uses, if any, on and in the vicinity of the annexed land; 4) The extent of any natural habitats and features of the landscape which should be preserved; 5) The demonstrated need for additional housing, retail commercial uses, other commercial uses, and industrial uses.

- The City should develop a package of incentives and encourage the following: 1) additional active parkland; 2) development of parkland; 3) increased historic preservation; 4) additional open space; 5) preservation of natural habitat; 6) preservation Savanna Oak clusters; 7) additional items as desired.

- To encourage the preservation of open spaces and natural features of the landscape, a project applicant may be allowed to concentrate the proposed development on a portion of the site through the clustering of buildings, smaller lot sizes, or taller buildings, provided that the overall unit buildout within the Plan area shall not exceed that authorized by the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

- Utility company rights-of-way may be considered for their use as public or private open space, trails, parkland, or other compatible recreational uses.

Transportation and Circulation

- The City shall plan for an integrated circulation system which provides for travel by private vehicles, commercial vehicle routes, a public transportation system, and for pedestrian and bicycle routes.

- Routes for additional bridge crossings over the American River shall be designated on the Plan Map. Because the Proposed Oak Avenue and Folsom-Auburn Road crossings will serve a significant amount of regional through traffic with distinctly different origins and destinations, financing and construction for the bridges should be considered as a package rather than separately.

- The City should develop and maintain a bikeways and pedestrian master plan that links residential developments with sources of employment, public open spaces, parks, schools, neighborhood shopping areas, the central commercial district, other major recreational destinations, and adjoining communities.

- The City should endeavor to provide routes for recreational travel, providing access to important recreational areas of the City, including Folsom Lake.

Open Space and Conservation

- The City may allow proposed development to be concentrated on a portion of a site and include taller buildings or smaller lot sizes to preserve a greater number of existing trees.

- Sensitive habitat areas and open space shall have their borders defined by public access ways, and/or shall have views from adjacent buildings oriented toward the areas.

- The City shall adopt standards for the designation, enhancement and maintenance of identified sensitive habitat areas.

- The City shall encourage the improvement of public access to recreational facilities and spaces through the publication of a trails and recreation guide which maps the trails, open spaces, and parks within the City of Folsom and shows the interconnection with trails and facilities in adjoining communities.

- The City shall adopt a Scenic Corridor Plan for the identified scenic corridors including but not limited to: 1) Folsom Boulevard scenic corridor from Highway 50 to Sutter Street; 2) Greenback Lane scenic corridor from the City Limits to Riley Street; 3) East Natoma Street scenic corridor from Oak Avenue Parkway to the El Dorado County Line; 4) Folsom-Auburn Road scenic corridor from the City Limits to Greenback Lane.

Safety Element

- The City shall work with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers in developing standards for development within the inundation boundary resulting from a failure of Folsom Dam or the dikes retaining Folsom Lake.

Parks and Recreation

- The City shall encourage, where appropriate, the inclusion of bikeways, walkways, and equestrian trails in parks, parkways, and open space acreage.

- Where feasible, park sites throughout the City shall be integrated with the Bikeways Master Plan and bicycle trails outside the City such as the American River Bike Path.

- The City shall actively encourage the protection and preservation of natural habitats identified in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

- The City shall encourage the development of parkways and greenbelts as an integral link between the Citywide park system.

- The City shall encourage the aid of State or County park rangers, i.e., Folsom Lake State Recreation Area, to provide leadership in programs that inform the community on topics such as conservation and fire safety.

- The City shall work cooperatively with the County Department of Parks and Recreation, State Department of Parks and Recreation, State Department of Corrections and State

Department of Fish and Game in coordinating facility development and program offerings.

Regional Planning Policy Context

This section summarizes regional plans and activities that address common elements crossing jurisdiction boundaries. These plans and activities are relevant to the Unit and could affect the future development on adjacent lands or the involvement of CDPR.

American River Parkway Plan

The natural beauty, proximity to an urban population, and recreational values of the lower American River corridor is of such significance that the river has been designated a Recreational River in both the federal and state wild and scenic river systems, and the trail system of the Parkway has been designated a National Recreational Trail. Additionally, the California legislature in 1985 acknowledged the Parkway's statewide significance by adopting the Parkway Plan through the passage of the *Urban American River Parkway Preservation Act* (Public Resources Code § 5840).[34] The 1985 American River Parkway Plan has authority over the land uses within the Parkway which extends from Downtown Sacramento at the confluence with the Sacramento River to Folsom Dam within the Unit. It is a component of both the Sacramento County and City of Sacramento general plans.

This Plan provides the policies for the preservation and use of the Parkway as a continuous open space greenbelt. The strongest working portions of the Plan are the land use designations and policies, which direct all recreation, restoration, preservation and development of facilities. For instance, the (PC) Parkway Corridor Combining Zone in the County of Sacramento Zoning Code includes special development requirements to improve public access and enjoyment of the riverfront, and to strengthen the amenity that the riverfront can provide to adjoining property.

Although the Plan is the primary management plan for the Lower American River, it has not been updated in more than 15 years and does not reflect recent flood and environmental resource management initiatives that are included in the River Corridor Management Plan described below. The process of updating the Parkway Plan is to begin early in 2003, a process that will allow decision-makers to strengthen the resource management provisions of Plan and address important land use and recreation-related issues that have developed in the past 15 years. It will also refine Parkway management mechanisms as necessary to give appropriate status to the cooperative relationships that have arisen in connection with the Floodway Management Plan and the Water Forum Agreement outlined below.

As noted, the geographic scope of the Parkway Plan includes Lake Natoma, an area that is formally managed in compliance with the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan. The Parkway Plan incorporates Folsom Lake General Plan by reference thereby acknowledging its validity as the land use plan for Lake Natoma. In keeping with this collaboration, the Parkway Plan states:

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[34] Lower American River Task Force, *River Corridor Management Plan Recreation Management Element*, December 2001, pg. 4.

> "In order to facilitate the coordination in the planning and management of the American River Parkway, it should be the responsibility of the respective State and county agencies to inform each other of any large scale public or private improvement proposals, requests for entitlement of use, plans for large scale events, or proposed policy changes which would affect the Parkway."

River Corridor Management Plan for the Lower American River

The purpose of the 2001 River Corridor Management Plan is to institute a cooperative approach to managing and enhancing the Lower American River corridor's aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, flood-control systems, and recreation values within the framework of the 1985 American River Parkway Plan. The Plan will also provide a significant foundation of policy work and scientific research for the update of the Parkway Plan, a process that began in early 2003. The Plan is used to inform resource managers and the community about the condition of American River Parkway resources, the challenges facing resource managers and the community, and the goals and objectives for improving resource conditions in a cooperative manner. It also recommends actions to achieve these goals and objectives. The Plan is intended to serve as a single blueprint for enhancing Parkway resources and to provide a cohesive framework for which both public and private entities working in the Lower American River can voluntarily coordinate their efforts to responsibly steward Parkway resources. It is also intended to assist management entities in assessing where their efforts might be most effective in achieving the Plan's goals and objectives and facilitate compliance with existing laws, regulations, and policies.

The River Corridor Management Plan includes a Recreation Management Element. The objectives of the element include:

- Developing and maintaining a trail system that is connected to the emerging trail network; accommodates the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists (especially commuters), and equestrians; and provides appropriate access for the disabled;

- Providing safe and appropriate access and facilities for rafting, canoeing, boating, fishing, viewing wildlife and other permitted activities;

- Providing a variety of interpretive facilities and services throughout the Parkway that help visitors attain an appreciation of the Parkway's natural, historical, and cultural resources;

- Providing a safe and secure environment for Parkway visitors, including improved emergency access supported by rangers and law enforcement personnel;

- Ensuring appropriate land uses adjacent to the Parkway, including residential and commercial uses, planned redevelopment, and transportation corridor improvements, that are consistent with the Parkway Plan and coordinated with adjacent land management agencies and land use jurisdictions;

- Operating and maintaining recreation facilities and resources in accordance with accepted "best practice" standards as a top priority;

- Ensuring that flood and natural resource management efforts are closely coordinated with recreation management efforts; and

- Ensuring the protection and enhancement of natural vegetation and wildlife habitat.[35]

In addition to these objectives, the Recreation Management Element includes specific recommendations relating to public access and trails, interpretation and education, land acquisition, adjacent land uses, public safety, public outreach, and operations and maintenance/recreation facilities. Specific recommendations related to the Unit include the acquisition of land for the Parkway—including the Snipes-Pershing property adjacent to Mississippi Bar recently acquired by CDPR—and coordination with CDPR on the update of the General Plan for the Unit.[36]

It should be noted that the River Corridor Management Plan is not legally binding and does not alter the mission, authority, or responsibility of any management entity, nor does it alter the status or use of the Parkway Plan.

Floodway Management Plan

The Floodway Management Plan was completed in 1998. Through a consensus-based process similar to that used in the development of the River Corridor Management Plan, the Floodway Plan documents a broad range of resource issues and concerns and develops goals and recommendations to better manage resources. Many of the recommendations included in the Plan are intended to provide guidance to resource managers on issues involving multiple resources. A great deal of the management direction provided by the Floodway Plan is carried forward in the Corridor Management Plan. Specific recommendations are intended to encourage additional research, communication, and documentation of important resource conditions and management needs. As with the River Corridor Management Plan and the American River Parkway Plan, the Floodway Management Plan applies to Lake Natoma, an area that is formally managed in compliance with the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan.

El Dorado County River Management Plan

Over the past 25 years, El Dorado County has banned and then actively managed whitewater recreation on the South Fork of the American River. In response to landowner complaints about noise, trespassing, litter, and inadequate sanitation, the County banned whitewater recreation by ordinance in 1976; however, the ordinance was later struck down by the State Court of Appeal in the case of *People ex rel. Younger v. County of El Dorado* (1979).[37] Following the Younger decision, the County adopted a Stream and River Rafting ordinance in 1980, and in 1981 the County began active management of commercial outfitters on the South Fork. In 1995, Mr. Bernard Carlson sued the County on the grounds that the commercial permitting process in the 1988 River Management Plan (RMP), as amended, was discretionary rather than ministerial under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Mr. Carlson prevailed in this litigation and, as a term of settlement, the County

[35] Ibid., pg. 17.
[36] Ibid., pg. 20.
[37] El Dorado County, *El Dorado River Management Plan*, November 2001, pg. 1-2.

agreed to contract with independent consultants to update the existing RMP and prepare a new one.

The 2001 RMP establishes a set of operational rules for commercial and private boaters navigating the 20.7-mile segment of the South Fork of the American River between the Chili Bar Dam, near State Highway 193, and Salmon Falls Road, at the upper extent of Folsom Lake.[38] The purpose of the RMP is to enhance public health, safety, and welfare, and to preserve environmental values. It includes detailed educational, safety, transportation, monitoring, and agency coordination programs designed to implement the RMP. The RMP also outlines permitting requirements, specifies the carrying capacity of the waterway, and identifies the regulations and ordinances that will operate the Plan. As noted in the Recreation Resources section of this document, commercial and private boaters on the South Fork take-out within the Unit. Commercial boaters are required to take-out at Salmon Falls while private boaters take out just east of the American River Bridge at Skunk Hollow. The Recreation Resources section also notes the difficulties at these take-out sites related to parking capacity, congestion, and traffic and pedestrian safety along Salmon Falls Road.

Community Open Space Efforts

There are several ongoing efforts by regional conservation organizations to protect open space. These groups may provide opportunities for partnerships with CDPR in acquiring, or protection by other means, important open space lands and significant habitat areas that abut the Unit. For instance, the American River Conservancy works with land owners in El Dorado County who are interested in selling or donating land. The Conservancy is currently working to complete a 6-mile greenbelt and hiking trail corridor along the South Fork that will link the Unit at Salmon Falls with Highway 49.[39] The Conservancy also owns and manages the Pine Hill Ecological Preserve. This 1,300-acre area of rare and endangered plant habitat is located adjacent to the Unit at Salmon Falls and has to potential to be expanded to include a total of 5,000 acres.[40]

In Placer County, the Placer County Land Trust works with landowners and conservation partners to permanently preserve natural open space and agricultural lands. The Trust is currently working with other groups to preserve critical lands adjacent to the North and Middle Forks of the American River. Among other organizations working in this area include Protect American River Canyons (PARC). In Sacramento County, the Sacramento Valley Conservancy has preserved more than 1,300 acres of open space and sensitive habitat areas. The Conservancy worked with CDPR to acquire the 35-acre Snipes-Pershing along the Lake Natoma Bluffs. The site provides a link between Orangevale and the American River Bikeway along the western shore of Lake Natoma in the Unit.[41]

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[38] Ibid., pg. 1-1.
[39] http://www.arconservancy.org/land_conservation.htm.
[40] Ibid.
[41] http://www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/image/projectmap.pdf

Regional Demographic Context

This section summarizes the regional demographic context as it relates to the Unit. This context is useful in describing current Unit users and in possibly identifying their needs. This section also outlines the projected growth for the region, which is useful in estimating future demand on Unit facilities and the potential need for additional facilities. A summary of the demographic aspects of the counties that abut the Unit (El Dorado, Placer, and Sacramento) is also included.

Sacramento Region

As noted in the introduction to this section, the Sacramento Region is defined as the six-county area comprising the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), including El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yuba, and Yolo Counties. According to the U.S. Census, the 2000 regional population was 1.94 million.[42] Of this population, 69.9 percent are White, 9.1 percent are Asian, 6.8 percent are Black or African-American, 1.1 percent are American Indian or Alaska native, 0.4 percent are Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 7.5 percent are some other race.[43] The remaining 5.2 percent of the population is comprised of two or more races. Overall, almost 16 percent of the regional population is Hispanic or Latino. With respect to households in the region, about 67 percent are family households with 61 percent of all households being owner-occupied. Strong growth is projected for the Sacramento Region to 2025. According to SACOG, the region will see a 49 percent (928,000) increase in residents and a 60 percent (510,000) increase in jobs.[44]

El Dorado County (excluding the Tahoe Basin)

El Dorado County has the smallest population of the three counties that abut the Unit. According to the U.S. Census, the 2000 County population was 156,300. The County is not as racially diverse as the region with 90 percent of the population being White. Seventy-three percent of households in the County are family households with 75 percent of all households being owner-occupied. County employment is dominated by management and professional (37 percent) and sales and office (25 percent) occupations. Other key occupations include service (19 percent), construction, extraction, and maintenance (10 percent), and production and transportation (7.6 percent).[45] About 69 percent of all workers in the County work in the private sector, 19 percent in the public sector, and 12 percent are self-employed. The median household income is $51,480 and the median family income is $50,250. Five percent of families in the County live below the poverty level. As with the Region, SACOG projects significant growth in El Dorado County to 2025, particularly with respect to employment which is expected to almost double with the addition of 31, 180 jobs.[46] The number of residents is projected to increase by 56 percent (69,500). El Dorado County is projected to see the most significant increase in population and employment through 2010, after which the annual rates of growth are expected to drop significantly.

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[42] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.
[43] Ibid.
[44] SACOG, 2001.
[45] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.
[46] SACOG, 2001.

Although the SACOG projections indicate the overall rate of growth for El Dorado County, the projections do not shed light on the actual distribution of growth since so much of the County is unincorporated. These projections are also based in part on the buildout of the County's General Plan which is currently undergoing significant revision due to a legal challenge. However, it can be assumed based on current development patterns in the County that future development will be focused in the western portions of the County including the lands that abut the Unit's eastern boundary.[47] This would support the fact that population and employment growth rates in unincorporated El Dorado County will continue to be slightly higher than growth rates for the County overall.

Placer County (excluding the Tahoe Basin)

Placer County is the second most populous in the Sacramento Region with a 2000 population of 218,000 according to the U.S. Census. As in neighboring El Dorado County, Placer County is not as racially diverse as the region with 89 percent of the population being White. Seventy-three percent of households in the County are family households with 73 percent of all households being owner-occupied. As in El Dorado County, management and professional is the dominant occupation in Placer County (40 percent), followed by sales and office (28 percent), service (13 percent), construction, extraction, and maintenance (10 percent), and production and transportation (9 percent).[48] Seventy-two percent of all workers in the County work in the private sector, 17 percent in the public sector, and 10 percent are self-employed. The median household income ($57,535) and median family income ($65,860) are both significantly higher here than in El Dorado County, and fewer families (4 percent) live below the poverty level.[49]

Tremendous growth is projected for Placer County to 2025. SACOG expects a 75 percent increase in population (178,200 new residents) and a 98 percent increase in employment (112,700 new jobs) to 2025. Annual rates of growth are expected to remain high (between 2.5 and 4.3 percent for population and between 3.0 and 4.4 percent for employment) through 2015 and then drop off steeply.[50] However, even the annual growth rates at 2025 (0.9 percent for population and 1.4 percent for employment) are significant. The majority of the growth projected in Placer County will largely reflect the current development pattern and be directed to southeastern portions of the County in the Lincoln-Loomis-Rocklin-Roseville and Auburn-Colfax areas. These cities, which are located along the I-80 corridor, are in close proximity to Folsom Lake and it can be assumed that growth here will result in more visitors to the Unit. Population and employment growth rates in Placer County cities is projected to be higher than in the unincorporated areas through 2015, after which growth in the unincorporated areas will outpace growth in cities.[51]

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[47] In a recent report prepared by Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. titled, "El Dorado County Land Use Forecasts for Draft General Plan" three development scenarios are explored. Each of the scenarios concentrates new residential development in the western portions of El Dorado County, including lands adjacent to the Unit.

[48] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.

[49] Ibid.

[50] SACOG, 2001.

[51] Ibid.

Sacramento County

Sacramento County is the most densely populated of the three counties that abut the Unit. According to the U.S. Census, in 2000 its population totaled 1,223,500, an increase of 192,000 residents or 19 percent. Sacramento County is the most racially diverse in the Region. Sixty-four percent of the County population are White, 11 percent are Asian, 10 percent are Black or African-American, 1.1 percent are American Indian or Alaska native, 0.6 percent are Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 7.5 percent are some other race.[52] The remaining 5.2 percent of the population are comprised of two or more races. Overall, 16 percent of the County population is Hispanic or Latino.

Sacramento County has significantly fewer family households (66 percent) and owner-occupied households (58 percent) than either El Dorado or Placer Counties. Employment in the County is dominated by management and professional (36 percent) and sales and office (30 percent) occupations. Other key occupations include service (14.5 percent), production and transportation (10 percent), and construction, extraction, and maintenance (9 percent). About 70 percent of all workers in the County work in the private sector, 23 percent in the public sector, and 7 percent are self-employed.[53] The median household income of $43,800 and median family income of $50,700 are both significantly less than in El Dorado and Placer Counties. Ten percent of families in the County live below the poverty level.

As with the Region, SACOG projects significant growth in Sacramento County to 2025, although nowhere near the levels projected for neighboring El Dorado and Placer Counties. A 39 percent increase in residents (476,640) and a 45 percent increase in jobs (252,490) is expected.[54] Sacramento County is projected to see the most significant increase in population and employment through 2015, after which the annual rates of growth are expected to drop by about 50 percent.

City of Folsom

The City of Folsom is the only city that abuts the Unit. In 2000, the population of Folsom was 51,880. Seventy-eight percent of the City population is White, 7 percent is Asian, 6 percent are Black or African-American, 0.6 percent are American Indian of Alaska native, 0.2 percent are Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 4.7 percent are some other race.[55] The remaining 3.4 percent of the population are comprised of two or more races. Overall, 9.5 percent of the City population is Hispanic or Latino. As in surrounding El Dorado County, 73 percent of households in the City are family households with 76 percent of all households being owner-occupied. More than in the surrounding counties, City employment is heavily dominated by management and professional (52 percent) and sales and office (26 percent) occupations, with the remaining occupations comprising service (11 percent), production and transportation (5.3 percent), and construction, extraction, and maintenance (5 percent).[56] About 73 percent of all workers in the City work in the private sector, 20 percent in the public sector, and 7 percent are self-employed. The median

[52] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.
[53] Ibid.
[54] SACOG, 2001.
[55] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.
[56] Ibid.

household and median family incomes are the highest in the Region at $73,175 and $82,450 respectively. Only 2.5 percent of families in the City live below the poverty level.

According to SACOG, Folsom will experience significant growth to 2025. SACOG projects a 42 percent increase (22,520 residents) in population and a 76 percent increase (17,695 jobs) in employment.[57] These rates of growth are less than in El Dorado and Placer Counties, but more than Sacramento County. SACOG also projects that the population of Folsom will level off after 2015 while employment will continue to increase, although at a rate that will fall off sharply after 2010.

Land Use Issues

This section summarizes the current issues related to land use and the Unit, including flood control, interface with surrounding lands, and major projects.

Flood Control System

- Possible reduction in the availability of boat ramps, marina slips, and beaches on Folsom Lake during the peak season resulting from the proposed increase in surface water diversions from Folsom Lake under the Water Forum Agreement (WFA). The increased diversions are intended to meet planned growth in the area through 2030.

- Implementation of the $3 million in improvements proposed by the WFA to mitigate the impacts of lower water levels on Folsom Lake, including: improved high water boat access; improved facility service range at the marina; water impoundments at Beals Point and/or Granite Bay to enhance swimming opportunities; improved shoreline facilities to enhance low water access, and so on.

- Possible construction-related impacts of the Folsom Dam Modification project on recreation uses at Folsom Lake, including the use of Observation Point as a construction staging area over a three-year period beginning in 2003 and the intermittent closure of Folsom Dam Road over a six-year period.

- Possible flood control operation-related impacts of the Folsom Dam Modification project on recreation uses at Folsom Lake, including increased flood control capacity and lake levels during large flood events that are beyond the current functional range of the swimming beaches at Beals Point and Granite Bay. Several facilities on Folsom Lake would be completely or partially inundated under the current maximum flood control level of 474 feet.

- Possible construction-related impacts of the Folsom Dam Raise project on recreation uses in the Unit, including:

  - Disruption of recreation activities on the American River Bike Trail between Negro Bar and Beals Point due to temporary access roads;

[57] SACOG, 2001.

- Relocation of the CDPR and BOR headquarters complex to accommodate the proposed alignment of a temporary construction bridge;

- Disruption of recreation activities between Beals Point and Beeks Bight due to increasing of dike height along Folsom Lake;

- Disruption of recreation activities on the American River Bike Trail at Mississippi Bar due to use of the area as a borrow material site; and

- Disruption of recreation activities at Lake Natoma at Willow Creek due to temporary use of the area as a borrow material storage and transfer site.

- Possible flood control operation-related impacts of the Folsom Dam Raise project on recreation uses at Folsom Lake, including an increase in the temporary water level that could be accommodated to 482 feet, a level that would completely inundate all recreation facilities on Folsom Lake and rendering them inoperable (most recreation facilities on Folsom Lake are at elevations of between 468 and 474 feet).

Interface with Surrounding Lands

- Enhanced buffering and screening to soften the interface between the Unit and surrounding development where such development could be incompatible. Such incompatible activities could include commercial and industrial uses, utility uses, transportation uses, and so on.

- Visual intrusion of surrounding development in the Unit, particularly in areas where ridgelines and hillsides above the Unit boundary are developed or where inadequately buffered or screened development abuts the Unit boundary. Areas include: Nimbus Flat, Lake Overlook, Beals Point, Mormon Island Dam, Brown's Ravine, New York Creek, and Old Salmon Falls.

- Access and off-site difficulties when the parking lots at day-use facilities reach capacity by midday on peak season weekends, including: traffic delays, illegal parking, pedestrian hazards, noise, and access difficulties for neighbors of the Unit. Facilities include Beals Point, Granite Bay, Brown's Ravine, and Salmon Falls/Skunk Hollow.

- Informal access by homeowners to the Unit from surrounding neighborhoods. Problems include: addition of gates in property line fencing to access the Unit where trail facilities are in close proximity; removal of property line fencing to extend yard use into the Unit; and; use of Unit lands as dump for yard waste and personal refuse.

- Recreation experience affected by noise coming from outside the Unit, including in locations proximate to major routes that parallel or cross the Unit. These locations include Nimbus Flat on Lake Natoma where Highway 50 and Hazel Avenue pass close by, and Negro Bar in the area of the Lake Natoma Crossing.

- Surrounding lands affected by noise coming from inside the Unit, including: traffic backups at popular day use facilities that reach capacity on peak season weekends; water-based activities on Folsom Lake, including from power boats and jetskis and music from boats moored or floating in nearshore.

- Wildfire risk due to the proximity of development to natural areas of the Unit, particularly in the rural northern portions of the Unit along the North and South Forks of the American River. It is in these more remote rural areas of that emergency response times are higher, and where the natural landscape within the Unit poses the highest risk of wildfires.

Major Projects

- Widening of Hazel Avenue in Sacramento County from four to six lanes, the addition of Class II bike lanes, and improved access points for pedestrians and cyclists to the Unit and the American River Parkway will impact the Unit. It has yet to determined if the Hazel Avenue bridge will accommodate all traffic or if a separate and parallel bridge for recreational pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian use will be built.

- Construction of the Downtown Sacramento-Folsom Corridor light rail transit (LRT) project by the Sacramento Regional Transit District will include stations in close proximity to the Unit, including at Iron Point Road, Glenn Drive, and Leidesdorff Street in Folsom. The Iron Point and Silverbrook stations will be located directly across Folsom Boulevard from the Unit boundary and will significantly improve transit access to the Unit.

- Widening of Folsom-Auburn Road by the City of Folsom from two to four lanes from Folsom Dam Road north to the Placer County line is to be completed in late 2003. Widening of Auburn-Folsom Road by Placer County from two lanes to four lanes from the Sacramento County line north to Douglas Boulevard is to be completed in 2006. These projects may enhance access to Beals Point and Granite Bay in the Unit and may ease traffic backups on peak season weekends.

- Construction of a temporary two-lane construction bridge just downstream from Folsom Dam will occur as part of the Folsom Dam Raise project. The bridge will be aligned to provide a detour route across the American River for the approximately 4 million vehicles that cross Folsom Dam each year. It has yet to be determined if the bridge will be dismantled, left in service to facilitate dam maintenance, or constructed to permanently relocate traffic from Folsom Dam.

Other Issues

- The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) projects that the six-county Sacramento region will see a 49 percent (928,000) increase in residents and a 60 percent (510,000) increase in jobs to 2020.

- The update of the 1985 American River Parkway Plan will begin in early 2003 and will require coordination with the update of the Folsom Lake SRA General Plan/Resource Management Plan. It is unknown how the current preservation policies in the Parkway Plan and the regulatory requirements of the (PC) Parkway Corridor Combining Zone will be affected by the update process. Regardless, the Parkway Plan update will affect the Unit in that Lake Natoma is part of the Parkway.

- Resource and recreational policy in the update of the Folsom Lake SRA General Plan/ Resource Management Plan as it relates to Lake Natoma will have to reflect and

incorporate the goals, objectives, and recommended actions of the River Corridor Management Plan of the Lower American River.

- The current General Plan for the Unit set aside a 28-acre area on the eastern shore of Lake Natoma between Willow Creek and Nimbus Flat for a proposed State Indian Museum. In 1991 a study on the proposal was completed, and a year later, a detailed feasibility study was also completed. In August, 2002, signed Senate Bill 2063 established the California Indian Cultural Center and Museum under CDPR and a task force to recommend a location, design, content, and governing structure. The task force will begin it's work in Spring 2003 and is schedule to recommend a site by February 2004. Sites other than that provided for in the current General Plan will also be considered.

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